

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application and the rejection of claims 1-6 are respectfully requested. Applicant has attempted to address every objection and ground for rejection in the Final Office Action dated March 4, 2005 and believes the application is now in condition for allowance, or in better form for an appeal. The claims have been amended to more clearly describe the present invention.

Applicant respectfully thanks the Examiner for conducting a telephone interview with Applicant's Attorney on June 2, 2005, during which the above-identified application and cited references were discussed.

Claims 1, 2 and 4-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jenkins (U.S. Pat. No. 3,368,665) in view of Clark (U.S. Pat. No. 3,187,881) or Sollenberger et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 2,132,053). Jenkins discloses a belt aligner having a pair of belt guide rollers 14 and 15 each mounted on an elongated portion 17 of a lever 10 or 11 in a corresponding guide roller mounting member 39. The mounting member 39 is attached to the lever 10, 11 by a pair of screws 32 which can be placed in any one of several pairs of spaced apart openings 31, allowing the mounting member to be adjustable. (FIGs. 1 and 2; col. 1, ll. 57-65; col. 2, ll. 34-50).

Clark discloses a belt alignment apparatus wherein guide rollers 19 are connected to a shift bar 17 via a shift lever 22 (FIG. 3). In Sollenberger, the

guide rollers 37 are attached to a bell crank arm 36 mounted on an upright post 34. The post 34 is mounted onto a support base 17 (FIGs. 2 and 3).

In contrast to the cited references, claims 1 and 6 have been amended to recite, among other things, “a guide control bar having two ends extending laterally outside of said conveyor frame and being pivotally connected at each said end to a corresponding torque arm that is located laterally outside of said conveyor frame and fixedly connected to said corresponding pivoting member...”

Applicant submits that as amended, none of the cited references, either alone or in combination, suggest or disclose all of the features recited in amended claims 1 and 6. Specifically, Applicant submits that none of the cited references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest a belt alignment system where the control bar ends extend laterally outside of the conveyor frame and are pivotally connected to torque arms that are located laterally outside of the conveyor frame. Rather, all three cited references disclose control bars and torque arms that are entirely provided within the conveyor frame. Applicant further submits that because of their constructions, none of the systems disclosed in the cited references would be adaptable with the above-identified application.

In addition, despite the Examiner’s rejection, Applicant contends that Jinkins teaches away from attaching the guide rollers 14, 15 to the control bar 13. Specifically, the guide rollers 14, 15, via their corresponding support brackets 39, are attached to the torque arm 10, 11 by a plurality of spaced-apart pairs of

holes 31, allowing the guide rollers/support brackets to be moved upward or downward along the torque arm. The control bar 13 is attached to the torque arms 10, 11 and is horizontally adjusted by means of its turnbuckle 40. (FIG. 2).

Attaching the guide rollers 14, 15 in Jinkins to respective ends of the control bar 13 would prevent the guide rollers from being moved up or down their respective torque arms 10, 11. Applicant submits that incentive beyond the scope of the invention would have to be applied in order to attach the guide rollers 14, 15 to the control bar 13 in a manner that renders the control bar/guide roller combination adjustable up or down the torque arms 10, 11. In addition, there is no suggestion or implication that such a construction is possible or desired.

Further, attaching the guide rollers 14, 15 to the control bar 13 would restrict the movement of the rollers during pivoting of the torque arms 10, 11. Less guide roller range of movement can cause a decrease in the belt alignment system's performance. Also, such an attachment would likely cause the guide roller/control bar combination to interfere with the tracking roller and torque arms, because of the small amount of clearance between the tracking roller and the control bar. (FIGs. 1 and 2). Applicant contends that incentive beyond the scope of the invention in Jinkins would have to be applied in order to construct the system with additional movement and clearance, as featured in the above-identified application.

Claims 1 and 6 have also been amended to recite, among other things, “pivoting members configured for supporting tracking rollers at corresponding tracking roller shaft ends, each said shaft end non-rotatably attached to corresponding pivoting members by a ball bushing...” In Jinkins, the belt support roller 18 is attached to a pillow block bearing 19, 20 mounted on a swivel base 30 and attached to the levers 10, 11, allowing the support roller to rotate, as seen in FIG. 2. However, the tracking rollers 28 in the above-identified application are fastened to the pivot assemblies 12, 14 by a ball bushing, which allows the rollers 28 to swivel, not rotate.

Finally claim 6 has been amended to recite, among other things, “a guide control bar having two ends...said bar including guide rollers, each adjustably positioned in a corresponding aperture provided at both edges of the conveyor belt for lateral control of said belt...” Applicant submits that none of the references, either alone or in combination, disclose or suggest all of the features recited in amended claim 6. Specifically, Applicant contends that Jinkins discloses a plurality of spaced apart pairs of holes 31 for adjusting the guide rollers 14, 15, and not a single aperture that allows the guide roller to be adjusted as recited in amended claim 6. Further, Applicant submits that none of the references imply or suggest an incentive to include such an aperture.

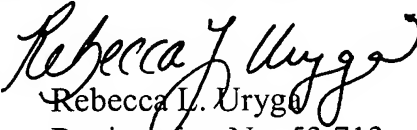
Accordingly, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 4-6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), and submits that as amended, claims 1 and 6 and all claims dependent thereon are in allowable form.

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jenkins in view of Clark or Sollenberger et al. or Hovsto et al. However, Applicant contends that because of the amendments to claim 1, from which claim 3 indirectly depends, this rejection is respectfully traversed and claim 3 is in allowable form.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is respectfully submitted to be in allowable form or in better form for an appeal. Allowance of the rejected claims is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner discover there are remaining issues which may be resolved by a telephone interview, he is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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